Indiana House of Representatives
News and Information

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BROWN'S MEDICAID, PHYSICIAN REFERRAL BILLS PASS OUT OF HOUSE

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Charlie Brown (D-Gary) is a co-author of two bills that were passed by the Indiana House of Representatives today. The first bill deals with Medicaid issues and the second addresses physician referrals.

Senate Bill 66 would prohibit the Office of Medicaid Policy from encouraging or requiring individuals to seek medical attention at hospitals other than ones located in the city where the patient lives. The office would also be required to reimburse the hospitals where treatment is received, given that certain conditions are met.

"It becomes a burden to patients when they are told they must go to a certain hospital in order for the care they receive to be covered by Medicaid," said Brown. "Medicaid is meant to assist Hoosiers who need medical attention and should not complicate their lives by encouraging or insisting that they drive all over town to receive medical care. The bill passed today will prevent that from happening."

The bill passed on a 76-8 vote. Once it has been adopted by the Senate, it will be sent to the governor for consideration.

The second bill Brown co-authored would require a physician to provide information to patients when referring them to a medical establishment in which the physician has a financial interest. House Bill 1306 was passed 86-0 by the House. It too will be sent to the governor upon its passage in the Senate.

"If a physician has a vested interest in recommending that a patient have a medical test, this legislation will make sure that the physician would be kept honest," said Brown. "This way, the patient will know that they need to have the test and it's not just being recommended for the financial benefit of the physician."

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